



**REBBETZIN DR. ADINA
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Fighting a Good Fight

הַזְכִּירְנִי וְאִתְּךָ יִשְׁפָּטָה יְיָ וְסִפְּרָה אֵתְּךָ לְעַמּוֹת הַדָּבָר:

“Help Me remember! Let us join in argument, Tell your version, That you may be vindicated” (Yeshayahu 43:26)

How do you fight a good fight? A look at this week’s Haftorah gives us insight into the uncomfortable dynamic of arguments but at the same time gives us hope for movement forward. Yeshayahu describes the deep rift between Hashem and His people - their unfaithfulness, lack of authentic devotion and service as demonstrated by their sacrifices without intention and abandonment of spiritual practice. And yet, Hashem expresses a willingness to converse.

Let’s take a closer look at posuk 43:26 for a better understanding of what it means to create an opportunity for dialogue

even when sparring with a loved one, in this case Hashem with His people. First, Hashem asks to hear the Jewish people’s side of the story. “הַזְכִּירְנִי, *Remind me,*” says Hashem even when He certainly doesn’t need to be reminded. Hashem engages His people, expressing interest in investing in the relationship, in hearing the other side. Metzudot David suggests that it is like two people who are fighting and one says to the other - remind me what you have against me. I need to hear you say it so I know why you are hurting and how I’ve hurt you..

Hashem then says, וְנִשְׁפָּטָה יַחַד, *let us judge together.* Even when arguing, the reconciliation is done together. Hashem expresses an openness to revisit and reevaluate. There are two sides in a relationship and Hashem is acknowledging the Jewish people as a partner. Next, Hashem gives the opportunity for the Jewish people to tell their side of the story, סִפְּרָה אֵתְּךָ, *you tell.* Maybe you can explain, says Hashem, what went wrong, why you abandoned Me. I’m ready to hear



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your excuses and explanations - I'm ready to listen. Finally, Hashem says, *לְתַטֵּן תִּצְדָּק*, so you will be justified. Says the Malbim, I want you to be vindicated because I don't want to or need to be right. I want your excuses to be true because I believe in you and your commitment to our relationship. Even if I could undo your argument, Hashem says, I would rather hold on to even the weakest excuse so that you could be right.

In hearing the grievances that Hashem lists, His abandonment might even, Heaven forbid, seem justified. It's His willingness to connect with us despite our sins that should inspire us to draw closer to Him. Beyond that, it should motivate us to connect with those who we may feel have slighted us. Hashem is giving us a model for our relationships, a guide on how to rebuild and repair when investment seems pointless and the connections broken. It is with this hope and inspiration that we will, please G-d, rebuild our people and merit a rebuilt Beit HaMikdash and the everlasting relationship with Hashem. ■

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